

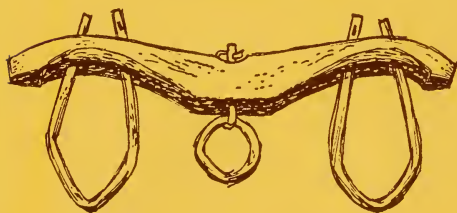
# HOW LINCOLN PRAYED



William J. Johnstone

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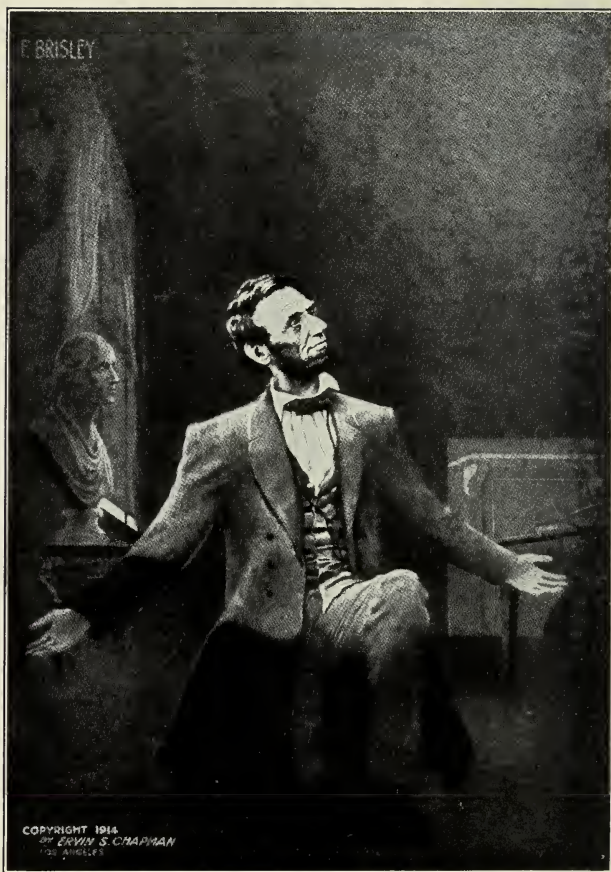


By WILLIAM J. JOHNSTONE

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN THE CHRISTIAN  
GEORGE WASHINGTON THE CHRISTIAN





### ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN PRAYER

From a painting by Brisley for Dr. Ervin Chapman,  
in *Latest Light on Abraham Lincoln*. Used by courtesy  
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# HOW LINCOLN PRAYED

WILLIAM J. JOHNSTONE



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DEDICATED  
TO  
MY DAUGHTERS  
FLORENCE LUCILE  
RUTH ALLYNE



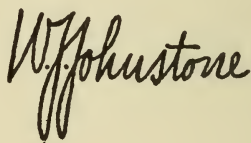
## PREFACE

PRAYER and the Bible were the biggest formative and sustaining elements in the life and character of Abraham Lincoln. They ran through his whole life. He said that he never undertook any important thing without first seeking divine guidance, and believing that he had it. It is impossible to understand or explain him without recognizing this fact. He said, in his recognition of God, "I have always taken counsel of him, and referred to him my plans, and have never adopted a course of proceeding without being assured, as far as I could be, of his approbation."

Lincoln's calmness and assurance in the midst of seeming disaster and defeat often amazed his friends and disarmed his critics, but neither could understand him. He explains it, "Amid the greatest difficulties of my administration, when I could not see any other resort, I would place my whole reliance in God, knowing all would go well and that he would decide for the right."

His assurance rested on personal experience. He said, "I have had so many evidences of his direction, so many instances when I have been controlled by some other power than my own will, that I cannot doubt that this power comes from above."

By bringing together the authentic evidence of his experimental prayer-life, it is hoped that there may come a better understanding of this great character and a higher appreciation of the Spirit-life in our great leaders.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "W. J. Johnstone". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Merrian Park,  
Saint Paul, Minnesota.

## HOW LINCOLN PRAYED

### PRAYING ANCESTRY

ABRAHAM LINCOLN came from a hundred and fifty years of Christian ancestry on his father's side. He was the product of six generations in this country of God-loving and God-fearing people.

His great-great-great-great-grandfather, Samuel Lincoln, came from England to Hingham, Massachusetts, in 1637, when seventeen or eighteen years old.

"These people that Samuel had joined and their forbears for generations had been struggling in England to escape the tyranny of priests and prelates, to secure the right to own and read the Bible, to interpret it in their own way, to make and say their own prayers, and to do away with complicated ceremonial, that, in their judgment, the church had substituted for righteousness of heart."<sup>1</sup>

"The fact that Samuel Lincoln was and remained a church member [Puritan

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Church] throughout his life is proof enough that he walked a straight and narrow path.”<sup>2</sup>

He and his sons contributed something like twenty-five dollars toward a new meetinghouse, built in 1681, still in use. “It has the distinction of being the oldest meetinghouse in this country, to have been in continuous use for as long as two hundred and forty years.”<sup>3</sup>

His great-great-great-grandfather, Mordecai Lincoln, was active in church affairs, independent in spirit and thought, and revolted against the Salem “witchcraft” persecutions, finally breaking with Puritan ecclesiastical leadership.<sup>4</sup>

His great-great-grandfather, also named Mordecai, left New England to escape Puritan intolerance, and located successively at Freehold, Monmouth County, New Jersey, thence to Philadelphia, finally settling in Berks County, Pennsylvania, near the present city of Reading. Many of his friends and neighbors were Quakers, among them being the father of Daniel Boone, whose sister married Mordecai’s youngest



son, Abraham, and was disciplined for her "disorderly act."<sup>5</sup>

His great-grandfather, John Lincoln, emigrated from Pennsylvania to the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, locating in Rockingham County, near Harrisonburg. His will "proves him a devout man." It begins, "Principally and first of all, I give and recommend my soul into the hands of God that gave it." Then it provides for the division among his wife and children of what he calls "such worldly estate wherewith it has pleased God to bless me in this life."<sup>6</sup>

His grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Virginia into Kentucky about 1782. The population was less than thirty thousand. No record is left of any church activity. We know that he grew to manhood in a settlement in Pennsylvania where there were Moravians, Dunkards, Amish, Quakers, Catholics, Jews, and descendants of Puritans. Where the family lived in Virginia there were a "few churches." He was shot by an Indian (1784) soon after the family arrived in Kentucky, when Thomas, the father of the future President, was only

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six years old (he was born in 1778). From the fact that the Long Run Baptist Meetinghouse, dating back to 1797, and an ancient graveyard where, probably, his body is buried, occupy a corner of the four-hundred-acre tract of land he had bought for their home, it would indicate that the group of settlers among whom he lived were religious people and appreciated the church. Preaching services were few and far between. Very likely the majority were Baptists.<sup>7</sup>

The ancestry of Lincoln's mother, Nancy Hanks, has not been so definitely traced as yet. John Hanks, probably an ancestor, was a Quaker, a near neighbor of Mordecai Lincoln's in Berks County, Pennsylvania. The Hankses followed the tide of emigration into Virginia and Kentucky.<sup>8</sup>

Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks received as good instruction as it was possible for the families in which they lived to give. "Certain it is, too, that they were familiarizing them with the Bible and the stiff moral code of the day. We must not forget that most of these people accepted very definite religious and ethical principles. Puritan,

Quaker, Methodist, Baptist traditions of creed and conduct regulated the lives of the people among whom Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were reared.”<sup>9</sup>

### MOTHER’S PRAYERS

In the winter time, by the big fireplace on Sunday afternoons, Mrs. Lincoln would read to her children those Bible stories so interesting to all children and pray with them. Her prayers made an indelible impression upon the mind of the young boy. In 1862, when he was President, his little boy Willie died. It was, perhaps, the greatest sorrow of his life. In the midst of his grief, his mind went back to his mother and he said: “I had a good Christian mother, and I remember her prayers. They have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life.”<sup>10</sup>

The effect of this mother’s prayers and teachings may best be told by her own son after he became known and loved the wide world over: “All that I am, all that I hope to be, I owe to my angel mother—blessings on her memory.”<sup>11</sup>

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### A CHILD'S PRAYER

The mother taught Abraham and his sister to pray, and they all made a brave effort to sing. Every night before he closed his eyes he breathed the familiar prayer:

“Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep.  
If I should die before I wake,  
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to take.”<sup>12</sup>

### FAMILY PRAYER

Although at first his father, Thomas Lincoln, was not able to read, Mrs. Lincoln would read a chapter of the Bible and he would lead in prayer at the morning and evening worship. Later, having learned to read slowly, he would read the Bible and pray at the family altar. The father always returned thanks at the table.

### PRAYS WITH LINCOLN

One of the most remarkable stories in connection with Mr. Lincoln's religious life is told by the Rev. James F. Jacquess, D.D., who was pastor of the Springfield Station (Methodist Episcopal Church), afterward named First Church. Bishop C. H. Fowler

accepted this story as trustworthy and included it in his lecture on Abraham Lincoln. It was probably in 1849. Mr. Lincoln attended church on Sunday morning.

DOCTOR JACQUESS says: "It was a good-sized church, but on that day all the seats were filled. I had chosen for my text the words, 'Ye must be born again,' and during the course of my sermon I laid particular stress on the word 'must.' Mr. Lincoln came into the church after the services had commenced, and there being no vacant seats, chairs were put in the altar in front of the pulpit, and Mr. Lincoln and Governor French and wife sat in the altar during the entire services, Mr. Lincoln on my left and Governor French on my right; and I noticed that Mr. Lincoln appeared to be deeply interested in the sermon. A few days after that Sunday Mr. Lincoln called on me and informed me that he had been greatly impressed with my remarks on Sunday and that he had come to talk with me further on the matter. I invited him in, and my wife and I talked and prayed with him for hours. Now, I have seen many persons converted;

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I have seen hundreds brought to Christ, and if ever a person was converted, Abraham Lincoln was converted that night in my house.”<sup>13</sup>

### MINISTERS TO DYING WOMAN

A touching incident which occurred in the fifties is told by Captain Gilbert J. Greene, who, when a young man, was a printer in Springfield, Illinois. He often took walks and short rides with Mr. Lincoln. At the time of this incident, Greene was nineteen years of age. The late F. C. Iglehart, D.D., of New York, said this story was related to him by Captain Greene while visiting at his home in Washingtonville, New York. He gives it in *The Speaking Oak*.

“Greene,” said Lincoln to him one day on the streets of Springfield, “I’ve got to ride out into the country to-morrow to draw a will for a woman who is believed to be on her deathbed. I may want you for a witness. If you haven’t anything else to do I’d like to have you go along.”

The invitation was promptly accepted.

On the way to the farmhouse the lawyer and the printer chatted delightfully, cementing a friendship that was fast ripening into real affec-



tion. Arriving at the house, the woman was found to be near her end.

With great gentleness Lincoln drew up the document disposing of the property as the woman desired. Neighbors and relatives were present, making it unnecessary to call on Greene to witness the instrument. After the signing and witnessing of the will the woman turned to Lincoln and said, with a smile: "Now I have my affairs for this world arranged satisfactorily. I am thankful to say that long before this I have made preparation for the other life I am so soon to enter. Many years ago I sought and found Christ as my Saviour. He has been my stay and comfort through the years, and is now near to carry me over the river of death. I do not fear death, Mr. Lincoln. I am really glad that my time has come, for loved ones have gone before me and I rejoice in the hope of meeting them so soon."

Instinctively the friends drew nearer the bedside. As the dying woman had addressed her words more directly to Lincoln than to the others, Lincoln, evincing sympathy in every look and gesture, bent toward her and said: "Your faith in Christ is wise and strong; your hope of a future life is blessed. You are to be congratulated in passing through life so usefully, and into the life beyond so hopefully."

"Mr. Lincoln," said she, "won't you read a few verses out of the Bible for me?"

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A member of the family offered him the family Bible. Instead of taking it, he began reciting from memory the twenty-third Psalm, laying emphasis upon,

“Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

Still without referring to the Bible, Lincoln began with the first part of the fourteenth chapter of John:

“‘Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

“‘In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

“‘And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.’”

After he had given these and other quotations from the Scriptures, he recited various familiar comforting hymns, closing with, “Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me.” Then, with a tenderness and pathos that enthralled everyone in the room, he spoke the last stanza:

“‘While I draw this fleeting breath,  
When mine eyes shall close in death,  
When I rise to worlds unknown,  
See thee on thy judgment throne,  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in thee.’”



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While Lincoln was reciting this stanza a look of peace and resignation lit up the countenance of the dying woman. In a few minutes more, while the lawyer and the printer were there, she passed away.

The journey back to Springfield was begun in silence. It was the younger man who finally said: "Mr. Lincoln, ever since what just happened back there in the farmhouse, I have been thinking that it is very extraordinary that you should so perfectly have acted as pastor as well as attorney."

When the answer to this suggestion finally was given—and it was not given at once—Lincoln said, "God, and eternity, and heaven were very near to me to-day."<sup>14</sup>

### ADVISES "FATHER" CHINIQUEY TO PRAY

"FATHER" CHINIQUEY was a Catholic priest who, because of alleged ecclesiastical insubordination, was persecuted by repeated efforts to crush him. Upon infamous charges he was brought to trial at the May term of court, 1856, in Urbana, Illinois. Abraham Lincoln was one of three attorneys to defend him. The Catholic hierarchy was determined to crush Chiniquy.

When Mr. Lincoln discovered a very skillfully constructed plot to secure by perjury

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a verdict against his client, he said to "Father" Chiniquy:

The only way to be sure of a favorable verdict to-morrow is that God Almighty will take our part and show your innocence. Go to him and pray, for he alone can save you.

At three o'clock the next morning Mr. Lincoln came to "Father" Chiniquy's room, and finding him in agonizing and tearful prayer, in which he had been engaged since eleven o'clock, merrily exclaimed:

Cheer up; their diabolical plot is all known, and if they do not fly away before dawn of the day, they will surely be lynched. Bless the Lord, you are saved!

A little later, while in conversation with "Father" Chiniquy, he said:

The way you have been saved when, I confess it again, I thought everything was nearly lost, is one of the most extraordinary occurrences I ever saw. It makes me remember what I have too often forgotten and what my mother often told me when young—that our God is a prayer-hearing God. This good thought sown into my young heart by that dear mother's hand was in my mind when I told you to go and pray. But I confess to you

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that I had not faith enough to believe that your prayer would be so quickly and so marvelously answered.<sup>15</sup>

### SINGS ON TRAIN

Lincoln's inward religious sentiment and feeling are shown in an incident related by the Rev. William H. Bates, D. D., of Washington, D. C.:

A lady eighty-seven years old—one of the most remarkable women I have ever met—was very recently “reminiscing” in my presence, and here is one of the stories she told:

“It was, I think, in May, 1858 or 1859, that I was making a night trip from Chicago to Saint Louis on the Chicago and Alton. That was before the days of Pullman. The railroad was narrow-gauged and primitive. The cars and their seats and windows were small. Among the passengers were an old gentleman and his wife, near whom I took a seat. I wrapped a shawl around my head and dozed away for hours. I was awakened by a gush of fresh air and the fragrance of flowers as some ladies entered. In the party was a man, very tall and very homely, who took a seat opposite mine. As day began to break, he threw up the sash, leaned his head out, and held his hat in place with his right hand, while his body filled the seat and his legs extended to the

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middle of the aisle. As if enraptured by the beauty of the sunrise, unconscious of the presence of anyone, he began to croon, in a tender, reflective voice, an old-fashioned hymn tune, the words of which soon became audible:

‘When all thy mercies, O my God,  
My rising soul surveys,  
Transported with the view, I’m lost  
In wonder, love, and praise.’

“There were two other stanzas from this hymn of Addison’s, but the first one was repeated over and over again. As the conductor came along, I quietly asked, ‘Who is this man?’

“‘Abraham Lincoln,’ he replied; ‘and he is on his way to a debate with Stephen A. Douglas.’

“I had heard much of the ability of Douglas; and now I had seen, yes, and heard, his antagonist. The simplicity, the apparently sincere devoutness, the religiousness of the man, made an impression that was indelibly stamped on my memory.”<sup>16</sup>

### BELIEF IN PRAYER

THE HON. NEWTON D. BATEMAN, who was superintendent of public instruction for the State of Illinois, in telling of a conversation with Mr. Lincoln at the time of his nomination and election in 1860, says:

Everything he said was of a peculiarly deep,

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tender, and religious tone. . . . After further reference to a belief in the Divine Providence, and the fact of God in history, the conversation turned upon prayer. He freely stated his belief in the duty, privilege, and efficacy of prayer, and intimated in unmistakable terms that he had sought in that way the divine guidance and favor.<sup>17</sup>

### IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

JUDGE JOSEPH GILLESPIE, an old friend living at Edwardsville, Illinois, to whom Lincoln once wrote in a letter (July 13, 1849), "The better part of one's life consists of his friendships," tells of a conversation he had with Mr. Lincoln in the latter's home in Springfield, Illinois, at the beginning of January, 1861, in which Mr. Lincoln said:

I see the duty devolving upon me. I have read, upon my knees, the story of Gethsemane, where the Son of God prayed in vain that the cup of bitterness might pass from him. I am in the garden of Gethsemane now, and my cup of bitterness is full and overflowing.

"I then told him," says Judge Gillespie, "that as Christ's prayer was not answered, and his crucifixion had redeemed the great part of the world from paganism to Chris-

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tianity, so the sacrifice demanded of him might be a great beneficence." Mr. Gillespie adds, "Little did I then think how prophetic were my words to be, or what a great sacrifice he was called to make."<sup>18</sup>

### GOOD-BY TO STEPMOTHER

On Monday, February 2, 1860, Lincoln went to Farmington, Illinois, to bid his stepmother good-by.

The parting between Mr. Lincoln and his mother was very touching. She embraced him with deep emotion, and said that she was sure she would never see him again, for she felt that his enemies would assassinate him.

He replied: "No, no, mother; they will not do that. Trust in the Lord and all will be well. We will see each other again."<sup>19</sup>

### PRAYER MEETING FOR THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

A prayer meeting for President-elect Lincoln was held in Springfield before he went to Washington. Mr. Lincoln was present. The Rev. N. W. Miner, D.D., pastor of the First Baptist Church of Springfield, tells



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about it: "In the early part of the winter of 1861 a meeting was held in the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, and was largely attended by the most respectable and best people of the city. Many fervent prayers were offered for our beloved country, and for the man whom Providence had raised up to guide the ship of state over a rough and stormy sea. Mr. Lincoln listened attentively, with thrilling interest, to the earnest prayers which were made. At the close of the meeting I passed down the aisle in which he was standing, and taking me by the hand he said, with deep emotion: 'Mr. Miner, this has been a good meeting. I hardly know how it could have been made better. I feel very grateful for the prayers offered in my behalf and hope they may be answered.' "20

### ASKED TO BE REMEMBERED IN PRAYERS

The REV. JAMES SMITH, D.D., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Springfield, Illinois, which Mr. Lincoln attended, says that at their last meeting previous to Mr. Lincoln's leaving for Washington in 1861,

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Lincoln said, "Doctor, I wish to be remembered in the prayers of yourself and our church members."<sup>21</sup>

### REQUESTS NEIGHBORS TO PRAY FOR HIM

In his Farewell Address at Springfield, Illinois, Monday, February 11, 1861, Mr. Lincoln said:

Let us all pray that the God of our fathers may not forsake us now. To him I commend you all. Permit me to ask that with equal sincerity and faith you will invoke his wisdom and guidance for me.<sup>22</sup>

### "AMEN, MOTHER"

A touching incident occurred at Columbus, Ohio, which unmistakably evidenced the sincere prayerfulness of the man. The Rev. George B. Stewart, D.D., LL.D., president of Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, New York, under date of November 14, 1912, writes:

A public reception was given to President-elect Lincoln in the State Capitol (February 13, 1861), during which he stood in the rotunda by the stairway leading to the Senate Chamber or the House. My brother, who was about twelve years of age, and I about seven, were in the line that passed by



## HOW LINCOLN PRAYED 27

the President and shook hands with him. Just ahead of me was an old woman, plainly clad, with a shawl over her head. She seemed to me, as a little boy, to be very old, but may not have been such in fact. When she reached the President she took his hand in both of hers and said, "God bless you, my son."

He took her hand in his and, bending down from what seemed to me to be a great height, she put her hand upon his head and she repeated the blessing, "God bless you, my son," to which he responded, "Amen, mother."

She then passed and it came my turn to shake hands with the President. As he took my hand I looked up into his face and saw the tears rolling down his cheeks. The incident is burned into my memory as one of those ineffaceable events of life. I never saw him again alive. The next time I saw him was when he was lying in his coffin, in state, in the same rotunda, within a few feet of the spot where I had witnessed the above incident four years before.<sup>23</sup>

### PRAYS BEFORE INAUGURATION

Mrs. Lincoln said that Mr. Lincoln wrote the conclusion of his inaugural address the morning it was delivered. The family being present, he read it to them. He then said he wished to be left alone for a short time. The

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family retired to an adjoining room, but not so far distant but that the voice of prayer could be distinctly heard. There, closeted with God alone, surrounded by the enemies who were ready to take his life, he commended his country's cause and all dear to him to God's providential care, and with a mind calmed with communion with his Father in heaven, and courage equal to the danger, he came forth from that retirement ready for duty.<sup>24</sup>

### PUBLIC PRAYER

When he became President, Lincoln selected the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church as the regular place of worship for himself and family. The Rev. Phineas D. Gurley, D.D., a large man in body and mind, strong in discourse, sound and orthodox in the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, was the pastor.

Later Lincoln said:

I went there because I liked the pastor, Mr. Gurley, and because he preached the gospel and let politics alone. I get enough politics during the week.

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The late Rev. William Henry Roberts, D.D., stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., told the author in 1912 that he attended that church for a year and a half, beginning in the fall of 1863. His pew was not far from Lincoln's.

During the so-called "long prayer," while the congregation remained seated, a number of men always stood up, and among them was the tall form of the President. He never would remain seated while the minister was beseeching the throne of grace. He regarded it as irreverent.

After the author had delivered an address on "Abraham Lincoln the Christian" in this church on Sunday morning, February 10, 1924, a lady told him that her husband had often spoken of the same thing, and that her husband's father was one of the men who stood up with Lincoln.

The pastor's youngest daughter, Mrs. Emma K. Adams, also told the author that she remembered seeing Lincoln at church. Two things impressed him upon her memory so that she has never forgotten. First, the pastor's family pew was opposite the Presi-

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dent's pew. The little girl, tiring of listening to her Scotch father's sermon, would get out in the aisle and walk around to rest herself. The President would reach out his long arm, pull the little girl over to him and, with one finger, play with the curls, but never taking his eye off the minister. Second, Lincoln's legs were so long that he couldn't get them between the pews, and he crossed them down the aisle.

### A CHRISTIAN NURSE

A Christian lady from Chelsea, Massachusetts, Mrs. Rebecca R. Pomeroy, who was a nurse in the White House when Tad had typhoid fever and little Willie died, speaks of Lincoln's great affliction and sadness. On the morning of the funeral she assured him that many Christians were praying for him. With eyes suffused with tears, he replied: "I am glad to hear that. I want them to pray for me. I need their prayers."

The lady expressed her sympathy with him as they were going out to the burial. Thanking her gently, he said, "I will try to go to God with my sorrows."

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She asked him a few days after if he could not trust God. With deep religious feeling, he replied: "I think I can, and I will try. I wish I had that childlike faith you speak of, and I trust he will give it to me."<sup>25</sup>

### PRAYED FOR HIMSELF

The REV. J. H. MANSFIELD, D.D., of Winchester, Massachusetts, tells of interesting facts which he received from Mrs. Rebecca R. Pomeroy. While in the White House to nurse the children in their sickness, at Mr. Lincoln's request, she told the story of her life, her conversion, and religious experience.

"Now," she said, "Mr. Lincoln, that is what you need—a personal love for God, and the knowledge that you are accepted of him."

He then requested her to pray for him, that he might gain this state of mind, and he prayed for himself. During the next few weeks a great change came over him. Hitherto he had believed in God and the Bible, and had prayed, but had enjoyed no

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experience in religious things. Now he seemed to love and trust God.

At Mr. Lincoln's request, Mrs. Pomeroy stayed at the White House three or four months after the boy's recovery. Often when a battle was being fought, he would ask her to go to her room and pray for success of our army, while he would go to his room and pray. Mrs. Pomeroy often heard him praying in his room.<sup>26</sup>

### PRAYER FOR DIVINE GUIDANCE

In April, 1862, the Rev. N. W. Miner, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Springfield, Illinois, with his wife, visited the Lincolns at the White House. Mr. Lincoln was sad and dejected over the death of little Willie and the destruction at the battle of Shiloh. He was discouraged.

Mr. Miner said, "Well, Mr. Lincoln, you have this encouragement: Christian people all over the country are praying for you as they never prayed for mortal man before."

"I believe that," he replied, "and this has been an encouraging thought for me. If I were not sustained by the prayers of God's



people, I could not endure the constant pressure. I should give up hoping for success."

Mr. Miner asked, "Do you think, judging from your standpoint, that we shall be able to put down the rebellion?"

He answered: "You know I am not of a very hopeful temperament. I can take hold of a thing and hold on a good while. By trusting God for help, and believing that our cause is just and right, I firmly believe we shall conquer in the end."

After further conversation he said: "I would gladly, if I could, take my neck from under the yoke, and go home with you to Springfield, and live as I used, in peace with my friends, rather than to endure this harassing kind of life. But," with great solemnity, he added, "it has pleased Almighty God to place me in my present position and, looking to him for wisdom and divine guidance, I must work out my destiny as best I can."

Doctor Miner sums up his impressions of Mr. Lincoln as follows: "All that was said during that memorable afternoon I spent

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alone with that great and good man is graven too deeply on my memory ever to be effaced. I felt certain of this fact—that if Mr. Lincoln was not really an experimental Christian, he was acting like one. He was doing his duty manfully, and looking to God for help in time of need; and, like the immortal Washington, he believed in the efficacy of prayer, and it was his custom to read the Scriptures and pray himself.”<sup>27</sup>

### A BENEDICTION

In a speech to the 12th Indiana Regiment, Thursday, May 15, 1862, Lincoln closed, as he often did, with a sort of apostolic benediction, as follows:

For the part which you and the brave army of which you are a part have, under Providence, performed in this great struggle, I tender more thanks—greatest thanks that can be possibly due—and especially to this regiment, which has been the subject of good report. The thanks of the nation will follow you, and may God’s blessing rest upon you now and forever.<sup>28</sup>

### PRAYS FOR BATTLE OF BULL RUN

In 1916, the Rev. Melville B. Gurley,



of Germantown, Pennsylvania, a grandson of Doctor Gurley, Lincoln's pastor, told the author the following story, saying that he had often heard his father tell it as having come from Doctor Gurley himself:

When the second Battle of Bull Run was in progress (August 29 and 30, 1862), Doctor Gurley went to the White House in the afternoon to be with Lincoln. They sat on the rear porch, overlooking the Potomac. The roar of cannon was plainly heard. As the afternoon wore on and the sound of cannon ceased not, the President, greatly distressed, asked Doctor Gurley to kneel with him in prayer. There, in the open air, beneath the blue sky, with the thundering of cannon reverberating among the Virginian hills, the overburdened President led aloud in earnest prayer for victory. His great soul pleaded with the God of nations.

#### ASKED GOD TO GUIDE

After the second defeat of Bull Run, Mr. Lincoln, greatly distressed on account of the number of killed and wounded, said to a lady friend, Mrs. Rebecca R. Pomeroy: "I have

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done the best I could. I have asked God to guide me, and now I must leave the result with him.”<sup>29</sup>

### HENRY WARD BEECHER AND LINCOLN IN PRAYER

“Following the disaster of Bull Run, when the strength and resources of the nation seemed to have been wasted, the hopes of the North were at their lowest ebb, and Mr. Lincoln was well-nigh overwhelmed with the awful responsibility of guiding the nation in its life struggle. Henry Ward Beecher, of Brooklyn, was perhaps more prominently associated with the cause of the North at that time than any other minister of the gospel. He had preached and lectured and fought its battles in pulpit and press all over the country, had ransomed slaves from his pulpit, and his convictions and feelings were everywhere known.

“Late one evening a stranger called at his house and asked to see him. Mr. Beecher was working alone in his study, as was his custom, and this stranger refused to send up his name, and came muffled in a military

cloak which completely hid his face. Mrs. Beecher's suspicions were aroused, and she was very unwilling that he should have the interview which he requested, especially as Mr. Beecher's life had been frequently threatened by sympathizers with the South. Mr. Beecher, however, insisted that his visitor be shown up. Accordingly, the stranger entered, the doors were shut, and for hours the wife below could hear their voices and their footsteps as they paced back and forth. Finally, toward midnight, the mysterious visitor went out, still muffled in his cloak, so that it was impossible to gain any idea of his features.

"The years went by, the war was finished, the President had suffered martyrdom at his post, and it was not until shortly before Mr. Beecher's death, over twenty years later, that he made known that the mysterious stranger who had called on that stormy night was Abraham Lincoln. The stress and strain of those days and nights of struggle, with all the responsibilities and sorrows of a nation fighting for its life resting upon him, had broken his strength, and for a time under-

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mined his courage. He had traveled alone in disguise and at night from Washington to Brooklyn, to gain the sympathy and help of one whom he knew as a man of God, engaged in the same great battle in which he was the leader. Alone for hours that night, like Jacob of old, the two had wrestled together in prayer with the God of battles and the Watcher over the right until they had received the help which he had promised to those that seek his aid."<sup>30</sup>

The story of this most remarkable incident was first given to the public by Mr. Samuel Scoville, Jr., of Philadelphia, a grandson of Henry Ward Beecher, who heard it from Mrs. Beecher herself, and Mr. Shearman, who was counsel for Mr. Beecher.

The author called upon Mr. Scoville at his law office in Philadelphia on October 29, 1912. He confirmed the accuracy of the story as here given, saying it is what his grandmother told him. Mr. Beecher's son, an attorney in New York City, also told the author that he knew that his mother had told of the incident. There seems to be no good reason for not accepting it.

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In reply to a letter from the Rev. David G. Downey, D.D., at that time Book Editor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, written from his office in New York City, December 13, 1912, Mr. Scoville wrote:

Doctor Johnstone showed me his manuscript in regard to the Lincoln episode. I told him that this story had been related to me by my grandmother, Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher, and I had no further knowledge as to its truth than that. It has been strenuously denied and also defended. It has always seemed to me to be a perfectly possible situation. It has never, however, been corroborated by any of the members of the family. It rests entirely upon the statement of Mrs. Beecher in her old age.

An editorial in the Philadelphia Inquirer says:

Those who doubt the story have no proof whatever. They claim, first, that it is improbable, and next that it is impossible. This is begging the question. It is true one of the White House clerks has risen to say that no such absence from the White House ever took place, but his testimony cannot be taken as conclusive. Lincoln could have made the trip if he had wished and without its being known to any person.

As to the probability of the story there seems

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little use of argument. There seems to be no reason whatever that Mr. Beecher, his wife or his counsel should have manufactured the story. Indeed, Mr. Scoville very properly took it as a matter of course, coming from such eminent authority. It is true that he is in no position to prove it by legal evidence, but there is no earthly reason why he should be called upon to do so. He related the story as told to him on excellent authority, and until it is impeached by better evidence than has yet been adduced it ought to stand. There are a thousand stories told about Lincoln which have no basis whatever, but which are swallowed by the public as true. Now when one is told with no reason for doubting its truth, it is denied with great fervor.

After all, the controversy seems useless. If Lincoln did not go to Beecher for counsel, it was probably because he lacked opportunity. That he did do so may well be believed until there is proof to the contrary.

I have been told, although I have not been able to verify it as yet, that there is a record in the War Department which shows that about this time President Lincoln went to New York for a conference with General Scott, who was stationed on Governor's Island, in New York Harbor. If that is correct, the whole matter is easy to under-



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stand. It is only a short distance from Governor's Island to Mr. Beecher's home.

### MIDNIGHT PRAYER

PROFESSOR JAMES E. MURDOCH, of Cincinnati, Ohio, the noted lecturer, elocutionist, and actor, rendered great service during the war in visiting the soldiers in camp, and appearing in entertainment to raise money for some patriotic movement.

Mr. Lincoln greatly appreciated his services and often invited him to be a guest at the White House. The following story was told by him:

"I spent three weeks in the White House with Mr. Lincoln as his guest. One night—it was just after the Battle of Bull Run—I was restless and could not sleep. I was repeating the part which I was to take in a public performance. The hour was past midnight—indeed, it was coming near the dawn—when I heard low tones proceeding from a private room near where the President slept. The door was partly open. I saw the President kneeling beside an open window. The light was turned low in the

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room. His back was toward me. For a moment I was silent, looking in amazement and wonder. Then he cried out in tones so pleading and sorrowful, that the astonished listener was transfixed:

“ ‘O, thou God who heard Solomon in the night when he prayed for wisdom, hear me. I cannot lead this people, I cannot guide the affairs of this nation without thy help. I am poor and weak and sinful. O God, who didst hear Solomon when he cried for wisdom, hear me and save this nation.’ ”<sup>31</sup>

The REV. F. C. MONFORT, D.D., editor and publisher of the *Herald and Presbyter*, Cincinnati, Ohio, says that he studied elocution under Professor Murdoch, and heard him tell the story of Abraham Lincoln's prayer which he overheard.<sup>32</sup>

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

In 1863 Professor Murdoch went with Major Thomas T. Eckert, who was on duty in the Military Telegraph Office in the War Department, to the White House to thank the President in person for his merciful act in pardoning a relative or friend who had



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been court-martialed and sentenced to death for serious violation of military duty. He gave them a warm welcome.

During the interview Lincoln asked Murdoch to recite something. He recited a poem entitled "Mustered Out," by W. E. Miller. The words are put into the mouth of a dying soldier, who in one of the verses says:

"I am no saint ;

But, boys, say a prayer. There's one that begins  
'Our Father,' and then says 'Forgive us our sins.'  
Don't forget that part, say that strongly, and  
then

I'll try to repeat it, and you'll say 'Amen.' "

When the poem was finished, Murdoch asked permission to continue the theme by giving in full the Lord's Prayer, and the President, who was visibly affected by Murdoch's fine rendering of the beautiful poem, nodded assent. Murdoch then began, "Our Father, who art in heaven," and in a most reverent and devout manner repeated the whole prayer, Mr. Lincoln audibly joining in the closing petitions. When he had concluded, all three of the group were in tears.<sup>33</sup>

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### CONSULTS HIS PASTOR

The first rough draft of the Emancipation Proclamation was written on Wednesday, July 9, 1862. The first person to whom he made known his decision to issue such a proclamation was his pastor, the Rev. Phineas D. Gurley, D.D. He invited him to the White House for a conference, after which the rough draft was carefully rewritten, and included four valuable changes suggested by Doctor Gurley.<sup>34</sup>

### WILL DO GOD'S WILL

On Saturday afternoon, September 13, 1862, two Chicago ministers, the Rev. William W. Patton and the Rev. John Dempster, representing a large meeting of evangelical denominations which had been held in Chicago the Sunday evening before, and bearing a petition which had been circulated, and was signed by all the Congregational and nearly all of the Methodist and Baptist ministers of the city, called upon President Lincoln to urge upon him the desire of Christian people that he should free the slaves.

In his reply, with the copy of the preliminary proclamation lying in his desk, near which he was standing, Mr. Lincoln began by saying:

The subject presented in the memorial is one upon which I have thought much for weeks past, and I may even say for months. I am approached with the most opposite opinions and advice, and that by religious men who are equally certain that they represent the divine will. I am sure that either the one or the other class is mistaken in their belief, and perhaps in some respects both. I hope it will not be irreverent for me to say that if it is probable that God would reveal his will to others on a point so connected with my duty, it might be supposed he would reveal it directly to me; for, unless I am more deceived in myself than I often am, it is my earnest desire to know the will of Providence in this matter. And if I can learn what it is, I will do it.

These are not, however, the days of miracles, and I suppose it will be granted that I am not to expect a direct revelation. I must study the plain physical facts of the case, ascertain what is possible, and learn what appears to be wise and right.

The subject is difficult and good men do not agree. . . . And the same is true of religious people. Why, the rebel soldiers are praying with a great deal more earnestness, I fear, than our

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own troops, and expecting God to favor their side; for one of our soldiers who had been taken prisoner told Senator Wilson a few days since that he met with nothing so discouraging as the evident sincerity of those he was among in their prayers. In their minds, no doubt their cause is just. But we will talk over the merits of the case.

After a lengthy discussion of the merits of the subject, he said in closing:

I can assure you that the subject is on my mind, by day and night, more than any other. Whatever shall appear to be God's will, I will do. I trust that in the freedom with which I have canvassed your views I have not in any respect injured your feelings.<sup>35</sup>

The visit of the ministers was very timely, as it gave him an added assurance of moral support from the churches, and probably increased his confidence in God. Some time after, Joseph Medill, editor of the Chicago Tribune, returning from Washington, said: "Secretary Stanton told me to say to those Chicago clergymen who waited on the President about the Proclamation Emancipation, that their interview finished the business. After that there was no manifestation of

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doubt or delay. Mr. Lincoln's mind was fully made up."<sup>36</sup>

### HIS MIND MADE UP

The lady who was staying at the White House as a nurse, Mrs. Rebecca R. Pomeroy, says:

"Riding down from the Soldiers' Home, or the President's summer residence, he told me of the struggle he had in his mind, and had succeeded, in regard to emancipating so many of that despised race, the blacks; and he said, 'I have made up my mind, with God's help, to set them free, for the time has come, and there will never be a better time than now, and I will do the best I can, trusting in God.' "<sup>37</sup>

### PRAYED BEFORE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

JUDGE HENRY C. WHITNEY, an intimate friend of Mr. Lincoln, says: "He earnestly and oftentimes prayed to God in these identical words: 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,' but in vain. Therefore, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation."<sup>38</sup>

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### PROMISE TO GOD

MR. FRANK B. CARPENTER, the artist, says that Secretary Chase told him that immediately after the battle of Antietam, September 16 and 17, 1862, and just before the issue of the preliminary Proclamation, Mr. Lincoln called a meeting of his Cabinet, on Monday, September 22, 1862, to consider the issuing of his Emancipation Proclamation. He began by saying:

The time for the annunciation of the emancipation policy can be no longer delayed. Public sentiment will sustain it, many of my warmest friends and supporters demand it, and I have promised God that I will do it.

This last was said in a low and reverent tone. Secretary Chase asked if he correctly understood the last sentence. Mr. Lincoln replied:

I made a solemn vow before God, that if General Lee were driven back from Pennsylvania, I would crown the result by the declaration of freedom to the slaves.<sup>39</sup>

The Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation was made public on that day.



## NO MISTAKE

September 24, 1862, two days after the preliminary Proclamation, a large body of men assembled before the White House to serenade the President. Alluding to the proclamation, Mr. Lincoln said:

What I did, I did after a very full deliberation, and under a very heavy and solemn sense of responsibility. I can only trust in God I have made no mistake.<sup>40</sup>

## MORE LIKE JESUS CHRIST

Abraham Lincoln's personality exerted a strange and mysterious influence, without doubt the effect of his soul—the spiritual nature of the man—for soul has a definite though inexplicable way of speaking to soul. A writer gives a strange example of Lincoln's power:

Early in October, 1862, after the battle of Antietam, the Army of the Potomac received word that President Lincoln would visit and review it and made great preparation for his reception. By that time the soldiers generally knew that the President was not altogether satisfied with the result of the battle. That fact, coupled with his Proclamation liberating the slaves, which



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had been issued a few days after the battle, made the coming of the President of more than ordinary interest. Some officers were apprehensive of trouble, for the idea of a war to abolish slavery was not popular with everyone.

Conspicuous among those who objected to emancipation was Captain Edward Reynolds, of the 59th New York Volunteers. The captain, although somewhat lacking in refinement, was companionable, entertaining, and generally popular. In speaking of the President, he was in the habit of referring scornfully to him as the "Old Man," and he frankly ridiculed Lincoln's sympathy with the slaves.

On the day of the review, the 59th had a position well down the line. Several minutes elapsed before the cavalcade that escorted President Lincoln, and that was headed by General McClellan and comprised the entire staff of the corps, appeared in sight. As the procession approached, everyone stood at attention. President Lincoln, pale and weary, rode a small dun-colored horse. Holding the reins in his left hand, and his hat in his right hand, he continually bowed to the troops as he rode by. Captain Reynolds kept his eyes on the President as long as he remained in sight. His face showed the conflict in his soul.

On our return to camp the review became the principal subject of conversation. When Captain Reynolds appeared someone called out to

him, "Hello, Captain, what do you think of the Old Man now?"

To the astonishment of everyone, Reynolds replied: "Gentlemen, I should like to say a few words. I have been making a fool of myself. When I first read the President's Proclamation I thought that his only object in carrying on the war was to free the Negroes, and it made me mad. Then I read the Proclamation again, and I kept on thinking about it, and now I know I didn't get it right at first. I never saw President Lincoln until to-day. I can't tell you how I felt when I remembered how I had found fault with what he had done and how I used to joke about him and say mean things about him, but when he rode past me to-day I never felt so sorry for anyone in all my life. He was so pale and sad and seemed so faint that I was afraid he would break down. He seemed to me more like Jesus Christ carrying the cross than a common man like the rest of us. I didn't understand till then. You will never hear me say anything mean about the President again."

The captain sat down amid complete silence. By common consent conversation turned to other subjects. From that time Captain Reynolds, brave and active as ever, was a changed man. He was no longer jocular and light-hearted; he became serious and thoughtful. In December he fell mortally wounded while leading an attack against a concealed foe. He was removed to a field hospi-

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tal where he died. His last words were, "I have prayed God to forgive me for what I said about the President."<sup>41</sup>

### PRAYER AFTER BATTLE OF CHANCELLORSVILLE

COLONEL W. O. STODDARD was one of Lincoln's private secretaries. The author visited him at his home in Madison, New Jersey, on Tuesday, February 25, 1913. He graphically told of the President's all-night vigil, following the news of the terrible defeat of the Union army at the battle of Chancellorsville, May 2-4, 1863, with a loss of seventeen thousand men. When the telegram was read, Lincoln, the tears streaming down his face, cried: "My God! My God! what will the country say? What will the country say?"

Herewith is given the story just as Mr. Stoddard wrote it:

"The country was weary of the long war, with its draining taxes of gold and blood. Discontent was everywhere raising its head, and opponents of the Lincoln administration were savage in their denunciations. Many

of his severest critics were men of unquestionable patriotism. The mail desk in the secretary's office in the White House was heaped with letters, as if the President could read them. He knew their purport well enough without reading. He knew of the forever vacant places in a hundred thousand households before Chancellorsville. If more than a third of each day's mail already consisted of measureless denunciation; if another large part was made up of piteous pleas for peace, for a termination of the long murder of the Civil War, what would it be when tidings of this last slaughter should get out and send back echoes from the heart-stricken multitude? Had not enough been endured, and was there not imminent peril that the country would refuse to endure any more? This question was, perhaps, the darkest element in the problem presented to Mr. Lincoln; for the armies, east or west, were ample in force and ready to fight again. Would the country stand back of him?

"There were callers at the White House the day on which the news of the defeat was brought; but they were not the customary

throng. Members of the Senate and House came, with gloomy faces; the members of the Cabinet came, to consult or to condole with the President. There were army and navy officers, but only such as were sent for. The house was as if a funeral were going forward, and those who entered or left it trod softly, as people always do around a coffin, for fear they may wake the dead.

“That night the last visitors in Lincoln’s room were Stanton and Halleck. They went away together in silence, at somewhere near nine o’clock, and the President was left alone. Not another soul was on that floor except the one secretary [Mr. Stoddard], who was busy with the mail in his room across the hall from the President’s; and the doors of both rooms were ajar, for the night was warm. The silence was so deep that the ticking of a clock would have been noticeable; but another sound came that was almost regular and ceaseless. It was the tread of the President’s feet as he strode slowly back and forth across the chamber in which so many Presidents of the United States had done their work. Was he to be the last

of the line, the last President of the United States? At that hour that very question had been asked of him by the battle of Chancellorsville. If he had wavered, if he had failed in faith or courage or prompt decision, then the nation, and not the Army of the Potomac, would have lost its great battle. It was the crucial test.

"Ten o'clock came, without a break in the steady march, excepting now and then a pause in turning at either wall.

"There was an unusual accumulation of letters, for that was a desk hard worked with other duties also, and it was necessary to clear it before leaving it. It seemed as if they contained a double allowance of denunciation, threats, ribaldry. Some of them were hideous, some were tear-blistered. Some would have done Lincoln good if he could have read them; but, over there in his room, he was reading the lesson of Chancellorsville and the future of the republic. Eleven o'clock came, and then another hour of that ceaseless march so accustomed the ear to it that when, a little after twelve, there was a break of several minutes, the sudden



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silence made one put down letters and listen. The President may have been at his table writing, or he may—no man knows or can guess; but at the end of the minutes, long or short, the tramp began again. Two o'clock and he was walking yet, and when, a little after three, the secretary's task was done and he slipped noiselessly out, he turned at the head of the stairs for a moment. It was so—the last sound he heard as he went down was the footfall in Lincoln's room.

“That was not all, however. The young man had need to return early, and he was there again before eight o'clock. The President's room door was open and he went in. There sat Mr. Lincoln eating breakfast alone. He had not been out of his room; but there was a kind of cheery, hopeful, morning light on his face, instead of the funereal battle-cloud from Chancellorsville. He had watched all night, but a dawn had come, for beside his cup of coffee lay the written draft of his instructions to General Hooker to push forward, to fight again. There was a decisive battle won that night in that long vigil with disaster and despair.



Only a few weeks later the Army of the Potomac fought it over again as desperately—and they won it—at Gettysburg.”<sup>42</sup>

#### EARLY MORNING PRAYER

In a memorial sermon preached on Wednesday, April 19, 1865, at Bridgeport, Connecticut, by the Rev. John Falkner Blake, rector of Christ Church, the following most remarkable occurrence is related:

“A distinguished lawyer of New York who is a professing Christian and an intimate friend of my informant had occasion some time since to see the President in Washington. He went to the White House, met Mr. Lincoln and asked for an interview of an hour. Mr. Lincoln said that the pressure of public duties forced him to decline such an interview. He urged that it was important. The President still declined. The gentleman was leaving when Mr. Lincoln stopped him and asked if he would be willing to come at five o'clock the next morning. He gladly agreed to do so and arrived at the White House the next morning, as he supposed at five o'clock.

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“On consulting his watch at the street lamp he found he had made a mistake of an hour and that it was only four o’clock. He determined to walk about the grounds until the time agreed upon. Coming near a window of one of the rooms of the Presidential Mansion, he heard sounds of apparent distress. On listening he found it was the voice of the President engaged in an agony of prayer. The burden of his petition was:

“ ‘O God, I cannot see my way. Give me light. I am ignorant, give me wisdom. Teach me what to do and help me to do it. Our country is in peril. O God, it is thy country; save it for Christ’s sake.’

“Here the gentleman felt his position to be questionable, and passing on, he left the President with his God. On entering the White House he mentioned what he had heard to the usher, who informed him that the President spent the hour between four and five every morning in prayer.

“How like our Saviour, of whom it is recorded, ‘In the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed unto a solitary place, and there prayed!’”<sup>43</sup>

## PRAYER FOR BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

GENERAL JAMES F. RUSLING, of Trenton, New Jersey, relates a significant conversation which he heard on Sunday afternoon, July 5, 1863, in the room in a building opposite the Ebbitt House in Washington where General Sickles lay wounded, a leg having been amputated, just after the great victory at Gettysburg. General Rusling, as a member of his staff, called on General Sickles, and while there Mr. Lincoln also called, with his son Tad, and remained an hour or more. The story is given herewith just as General Rusling told it to the author in his office, February 17, 1910:

Mr. Lincoln rode horseback from his summer home (now the Soldiers' Home). He wore a long linen duster, with a stovepipe hat, his trousers stuffed in the tops of his tall riding boots, and his spurs on. He sat down and talked with General Sickles as man to man, not as the great President. They talked about the war and the battle of Gettysburg. In reply to a question from General Sickles whether or not the President

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was anxious about the battle at Gettysburg, Lincoln gravely said: "No, I was not. Some of my Cabinet and many others in Washington were, but I had no fears."

General Sickles inquired how this was, and seemed curious about it. Mr. Lincoln hesitated, but finally replied:

"Well, I will tell you how it was, but I would rather you wouldn't say anything about it just now, for the people might not understand. In the pinch of your campaign up there, when everybody seemed panic-stricken, and nobody could tell what was going to happen, oppressed by the gravity of our affairs, I went to my room one day, and locked the door, and got down on my knees before Almighty God, and prayed to him mightily for victory at Gettysburg. I told him that this was his war, and our cause his cause, but we couldn't stand another Fredericksburg or Chancellorsville. And I then and there made a solemn vow to Almighty God, that if he would stand by our boys at Gettysburg, I would stand by him. And he *did* stand by you boys, and I *will* stand by him. And after that (I don't

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know how it was, and I can't explain it), soon a sweet comfort crept into my soul that God Almighty had taken the whole business into his own hands and that things would go all right at Gettysburg. And that is why I had no fears about you."<sup>44</sup>

### PRAYS FOR VICKSBURG

Asked concerning Vicksburg, the news of which victory had not yet reached him, he said, "I have been praying for Vicksburg also, and believe our heavenly Father is going to give us victory there too."

Of course, he did not know that Vicksburg had already surrendered the day before (July 4).

General Rusling says that Mr. Lincoln spoke "solemnly and pathetically, as if from the depth of his heart," and that his manner was deeply touching.<sup>45</sup>

### PRAYS FOR PORT HUDSON

A lady friend and nurse, Mrs. Rebecca R. Pomeroy, who was staying at the White House for fourteen weeks, says that on Thursday, July 9, 1863, while sitting at the

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dinner table the President could not eat, for he seemed so full of trouble as he said: "The battle of Port Hudson is now going on, and many lives will be sacrificed on both sides. But I have done the best I could, trusting in God; for if they gain this important point, we are lost; and, on the other hand, if we could only gain it, we shall have gained much; and I think we shall, for we have a great deal to thank God for, for we have Vicksburg and Gettysburg already."

The lady said, "Mr. Lincoln, prayer will do what nothing else will; can you not pray?"

"Yes, I will," he replied; and while the tears were dropping from his haggard and worn face he said, "Pray for me," and picked up a Bible and went to his room.

"Could all the people of the nation have overheard the earnest petition that went up from that inner chamber as it reached the ears of the nurse, they would have fallen upon their knees with tearful and reverential sympathy."

That night he received a dispatch announcing a Union victory. He went directly



# A PRAYING PRESIDENT

GEN. JAMES F. RUSLING, of Trenton, N. J., relates a significant conversation which he heard on Sunday, July 5, 1863, in the room in Washington where Gen. Sickles lay wounded, just after the great victory at Gettysburg. In reply to a question from Gen. Sickles whether or not the President was anxious about the battle at Gettysburg, Lincoln gravely said, "No, I was not; some of my cabinet and many others in Washington were, but I had no fears." Gen. Sickles inquired how this was, and seemed curious about it. Mr. Lincoln hesitated, but finally replied: "Well, I will tell you how it was. In the pinch of your campaign up there, when everybody seemed panic-stricken, and nobody could tell what was going to happen, oppressed by the gravity of our affairs, I went to my room one day, and locked the door, and got down on my knees before Almighty God, and prayed to Him mightily for victory at Gettysburg. I told Him that this was His war, and our cause His cause, but we couldn't stand another Fredericksburg or Chancellorsville. And I then and there made a solemn vow to Almighty God, that if He would stand by our boys at Gettysburg, I would stand by Him. And He did stand by you boys, and I will stand by Him. And after that (I don't know how it was, and I can't explain it), soon a sweet comfort crept into my soul that God Almighty had taken the whole business into His own hands and that things would go all right at Gettysburg. And that is why I had no fears about you." Asked concerning Vicksburg, the news of which victory had not yet reached him, he said, "I have been praying for Vicksburg also, and believe our Heavenly Father is going to give us victory there, too." Of course, he did not know that Vicksburg had already surrendered the day before. Gen. Rusling says that Mr. Lincoln spoke "solemnly and pathetically, as if from the depth of his heart," and that his manner was deeply touching.

I hereby certify that the foregoing statement by General Rusling is true in substance & known from

I certify this statement of a conversation between President Lincoln and General Sickles in my presence at Washington D.C. July 5, 1863, General Sickles, Trenton, N.J. July 17/1863

It is my duty to certify that the above statement is true in substance & known from the original copy of the statement of General Sickles, Trenton, N.J. July 17, 1863





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to his friend's room, his face beaming with joy, saying: "Good news! Good news! Port Hudson is ours! The victory is ours, and God is good."

When the lady replied, "Nothing like prayer in times of trouble," Mr. Lincoln said, "Yes, oh, yes—praise—prayer and praise go together."<sup>46</sup>

### DRIVEN UPON HIS KNEES

In all the great emergencies of his closing years Mr. Lincoln's reliance upon divine guidance and assistance was often extremely touching.

He once remarked to an intimate friend, Judge Henry C. Whitney: "I have been driven many times upon my knees, by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom, and that of all about me, seemed insufficient for that day."<sup>47</sup>

### PURPOSE IN PRAYER

JUDGE HENRY C. WHITNEY also testified: "We sadly know that too many Christians pray perfunctorily simply to pray to observe the Christian habit and fashion; but Lincoln

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did not pray as a form or as an end. His prayers were for a utilitarian purpose and object—to obtain help in time of dire need.”

“His prayers were not those of the hypocrites ‘who stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets that they may be seen of men,’ nor did he ‘use vain repetitions as the heathen do,’ but he entered into his closet and when he had shut the door prayed to his Father in secret.”

“He believed in the direct intervention of God in our national affairs, and he frequently used to ask him in a direct, manly way to grant this boon, avert that disaster, or advise him what to do in a given contingency.”<sup>48</sup>

### TALKED WITH GOD

DOCTOR ROBERT BROWNE reports that Mr. Lincoln once said: “I have talked with God. It is his cause, and the Union is his. As he willeth, so it will be. We can but follow and pray for its integrity and for mercy to the fallen.”<sup>49</sup>

### REQUESTS MANY TO PRAY FOR HIM

MR. JOHN G. NICOLAY, his private secre-

tary, says: "Mr. Lincoln was a praying man; I know that to be a fact. And I have heard him request people to pray for him, which he would never have done had he not believed that prayer is answered.

"Many a time I have heard Mr. Lincoln ask ministers and Christian women to pray for him, and he did not do this for effect. He was no hypocrite. He had such reverence for sacred things that he would not trifle with them. I have heard him say that he prayed."<sup>50</sup>

#### APPROVES PRAYER MEETINGS IN HOSPITALS

An army nurse, Mrs. Rebecca R. Pomeroy, makes an interesting statement of President Lincoln's interest in the religious welfare of soldiers in the hospitals: "He inquired very minutely into the method of speaking with sick and dying soldiers—what she said to them—how they answered her—how many of them became Christians. He accompanied her many times to the hospital and witnessed her effective management and talked with the soldiers and encouraged them. On learning that the managers of the

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hospital, who were Roman Catholics, had forbidden the Protestant nurses to pray with the soldiers, or read the Bible to them, he promptly removed the restriction, and allowed Christian women henceforth to hold prayer meetings, read the Bible to the 'boys' and pray with them, as much as they pleased, adding,

“‘If there were more praying and less swearing, it would be far better for our country, and we all need to be prayed for, officers as well as privates; and if I were near death, I think I should like to hear prayer.’ ”<sup>51</sup>

### KNELT IN PRAYER

A minister of the gospel relates the following: “After visiting schools, and holding meetings with the freed people, and attending to other religious service south of Washington and in that city, I felt that I must attend to manifest duty, and offer a visit in gospel love to our noble President. It was immediately granted, and a quarter past six that evening was fixed as the time. Under deep feeling I went. The President gave us

a cordial welcome, and after pleasant, instructive conversation, during which he said, in reference to the freedmen, 'If I have been one of the instruments in liberating this long-suffering, down-trodden people, I thank God for it,' . . . a precious covering spread over us. The good man rested his head upon his hand, and under a sobering, gathering influence I knelt in solemn prayer. He knelt close beside me, and I felt that his heart went with every word as utterance was given. I afterward addressed him, and when we arose to go, he shook my hand heartily, and thanked me for the visit."<sup>52</sup>

#### ASKS MINISTER TO PRAY

A minister from a little village in central New York went with his congressman to the White House to call on Mr. Lincoln. After the introduction the congressman withdrew, leaving Mr. Lincoln and the minister alone. The minister said: "I have only come to say that the loyal people are sustaining you and will continue to do so. We are giving you all that we have—the lives of our sons as well as our confidence and our prayers. You

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must know that no pious father or mother ever kneels in prayer these days without asking God to give you strength and wisdom."

The tears filled Lincoln's eyes as he thanked his visitor and said: "But for those prayers I should have faltered and perhaps failed long ago. Tell every father and mother you know to keep on praying and I will keep on fighting, for I am sure that God is on our side."

As the clergyman started to leave the room, Lincoln held him by the hand and said, "I suppose I may consider this a sort of pastoral call."

"Yes," replied the clergyman.

"Out in our country," continued Lincoln, "when a parson made a pastoral call, it was always the custom for the folks to ask him to lead in prayer, and I should like to ask you to pray with me to-day; pray that I may have strength and wisdom."

The two men knelt side by side before a settee and the minister offered the most fervent appeal to the Almighty Power that ever fell from his lips. As they arose, Lincoln



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grasped his visitor's hand and remarked in a satisfied sort of way, "I feel better."<sup>53</sup>

### ASKS BISHOP SIMPSON TO PRAY

BISHOP MATTHEW SIMPSON, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, said to Chaplain (afterward Bishop) C. C. McCabe: "One day, in the darkest time of the war, I called to see Mr. Lincoln. We talked long and earnestly about the situation. When I rose to go, Mr. Lincoln stepped to the door and turned the key and said: 'Bishop, I feel the need of prayer as never before. Please pray with me.'

"And so we knelt down in that room together and all through the prayer the President responded most fervently."<sup>54</sup>

### BISHOP JANES PRAYS

BISHOP EDMUND S. JANES, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, said: "Many times during the war, when I visited Lincoln in his private office in Washington, he said: 'Do not go, Bishop, until you have prayed with me. We need your prayers and the divine direction in these critical hours.'

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“And so, time after time, I knelt by Mr. Lincoln in the White House when we two were alone, and carried the cause of the Union and the needs of the President’s anxious heart and of our distracted country to the Lord in prayer.”<sup>55</sup>

### “FATHER” CHINIQUY PRAYS

“FATHER” CHINIQUY, converted Catholic priest, had an interview with Mr. Lincoln on Thursday, June 9, 1864, about the danger of assassination. At the close, Mr. Chiniquy says: “I was beside myself. Bathed in tears, I tried to say something, but I could not utter a word. I knew the hour to leave had come. I asked the President permission to fall on my knees and pray with him that his life might be spared; and he knelt with me. But I prayed more with my tears and sobs than with my words.”<sup>56</sup>

### WATCH AND PRAY

BISHOP CHARLES H. FOWLER, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in his *Patriotic Orations*, quotes the Rev. Doctor Newell Dwight Hillis as saying:

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I have a woman in my congregation who is the daughter of the Presbyterian minister [Doctor Gurley] in whose church Mr. Lincoln worshiped during the war. She says: "Mr. Lincoln frequently came to our house in the evening, stopped at the door, and said to my father, 'Doctor, you must pray to-night.'

"One night he called at half-past one, called my father up and said: 'Doctor, you must come down and go to my room with me. I need you.'

"My father went and found Mr. Lincoln's room strewn with maps, where he was marking the movements of troops. He said to my father: 'There is your room. You go in there and pray, and I will stay here and watch.'

"My father heard him repeatedly praying for the army. Three times he came to my father's room and fell down on his face on the floor by his side and prayed mightily to God to bless the boys about to die for the republic, and to save the republic."<sup>57</sup>

### HEARD LINCOLN PRAY

MAJOR JAMES B. MERWIN, a most intimate friend and associate of Lincoln, wrote: "I knew Mr. Lincoln intimately from 1854 to the day of his assassination. Dined with him that day. He came to be one of the most profoundly Christian men I ever knew. He

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had no religious cant about him at all. I heard and saw Lincoln pray often. He was divinely aided, and asked—begged—for such guidance, conscious of his own need of help beyond any human aid.”<sup>58</sup>

### SILENT PRAYER

One who knew him well declared: “He seemed never to be alone. I have frequently seen him, in the midst of a court in session, with his mind completely withdrawn from the busy scene before his eyes, as completely abstracted as if he were in absolute solitude.

. . .

“His moods were between himself and his God. No one ever dared to approach him as to the why or the wherefore of his silence.”<sup>59</sup>

### PRAYS WITH SERVANTS

A Negro clergyman writes of a visit to the colored servants at the White House, in which he says: “In the year 1865, while a chaplain at Freedmen’s Village, on Arlington Heights, after the assassination, but three weeks before Mrs. Lincoln left the

White House, I dined with the servants employed at the house, some of whom had been engaged in personal attendance upon Mr. Lincoln. My object was really to know more about him whose memory is still dear to me. I asked the servants how Mr. Lincoln treated them. I was told that frequently, late at night, Mr. Lincoln came downstairs to teach them to read, and often took such occasions to draw their thoughts toward the Saviour of all mankind. He also often prayed with them.”<sup>60</sup>

#### DAILY PRAYER

“Mr. Lincoln said that after he went to the White House he kept up the habit of daily prayer. Sometimes, he said, it was only ten words, but those ten words he had.”<sup>61</sup> It seems to have been his habit *before* he became President, as well as afterward.

Once when a number of the members of the Christian Commission were holding an interview with the President, it was privately communicated to a member of the commission that Mr. Lincoln was in the habit of spending an early hour each day in prayer.

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“As a child, in a dark and stormy night, on a rugged way, catches hold of the hand of its father for guidance and support, Lincoln clung by faith to the hand of” his heavenly Father, “and moved calmly through the gloom.”

The Hon. Schuyler Colfax, afterward Vice-President of the United States, said that Lincoln would often get up as early as four o'clock in the morning in order that he might have time to read his Bible and pray before visitors would begin to arrive at the White House.

### ATTENDS PRAYER MEETING

I have been told by the Rev. William Henry Roberts, D.D., who was the stated clerk of the Presbyterian General Assembly, U. S. A., the Rev. Wallace Radcliffe, D.D., who was pastor of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church for twenty-five years, and others, that a part of the time while he was President, Mr. Lincoln attended the midweek prayer meeting. Politicians, who could not get to him at the White House, learning that he went to prayer meeting,



would stand at the door of the church, hoping to have a word with him as he went in or came out. To avoid this annoyance, it was arranged that Lincoln should go through a small passageway between the rear of the church and the next building, entering the church by a door which opened into the pastor's room. Lincoln would sit there alone in the dark. None but the pastor and sexton knew he was there. The door into the prayer-meeting room would be left slightly open, so that he could hear everything that went on in the prayer meeting. After the meeting, if there had been a good deal of praying, he would often say to Doctor Gurley, the pastor, "I enjoyed the meeting to-night; it did me good."

A lady who is still a member of the church told the author that her husband, then a boy, attended the prayer meetings. He often saw Lincoln's shadow or silhouette on the window, resting his elbow on the arm of the chair, and his head on his hand. He said it was the saddest picture he ever saw. Curious to know if the President returned to the White House, on two occasions when there



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was a light snow on the ground, he followed him, trying to step in Lincoln's steps. They were the biggest steps he ever tried to follow, and led direct to the White House.

### SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Mr. Lincoln spoke as follows of his inspiration or spiritual guidance:

When I set my mind at work to find some way of evading or declining a journey, a speech or service, instead of my own spirit a something stronger says: "You must go. You must not disappoint these people, who have given you their confidence as they have no other man."

I am a full believer that God knows what he wants a man to do, that which pleases him. It is never well with the man who heeds it not. I talk to God. My mind seems relieved when I do, and a way is suggested, that if it is not a supernatural one, it is always one that comes at a time, and accords with a common sense view of the work. . . . I take up the common one of making a speech somewhere or other. These come almost every day. I get ready for them as occasion seems to require. I arrange the facts, make a few notes, some little memorandums like these you have seen so often and are so familiar with. I take them, and as far as facts are concerned, confine myself to them and rarely make any particular prepara-

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tion for feeling, sympathy, or purely sentimental thought.

When my plans for the discussion are made, and the foundations are laid, I find that I am done and all at sea unless I arouse myself to the spirit and merits of my cause. With my mind directed to the necessity, I catch the fire of it, the spirit of the inspiration. I see it reflected in the open faces and throbbing hearts before me. This impulse comes and goes, and again returns and seems to take possession of me. The influence, whatever it is, has taken effect. It is contagion; the people fall into the stream and follow me in the inspiration, or what is beyond my understanding. This seems evidence to me, a weak man, that God himself is leading the way.<sup>62</sup>

### ASSISTANCE OF THE ALMIGHTY

To the synod of the old-school Presbyterians of Baltimore, who waited on him in a body, he said:

I saw upon taking my position here I was going to have an administration, if administration at all, of extraordinary difficulty. It was without exception a time of the greatest difficulty this country ever saw. I was early brought to a lively reflection that nothing in my powers whatever, or others, to rely upon would succeed without direct assistance of the Almighty. I have often wished

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that I was a more devout man than I am. Nevertheless, amid the greatest difficulties of my administration, when I could not see any other resort, I would place my whole reliance in God, knowing all would go well and that he would decide for the right.<sup>63</sup>

### NATIONAL PRAYER MEETINGS

Mr. Lincoln's great faith in prayer is shown in his proclamations for national prayer. Nine times during the war he issued proclamations calling the nation to thanksgiving, fasting, and prayer. (In the following quotations *italics* are by the author.)

August 12, 1861:

And whereas when our own beloved country, once, by the blessing of God, united, prosperous and happy, is now afflicted with faction and civil war, it is peculiarly fit for us to recognize the hand of God in this terrible visitation, and in sorrowful remembrance of our own faults and crimes as a nation and as individuals, to humble ourselves before Him and to *pray* for His mercy—to *pray* that we may be spared further punishment though most justly deserved; that our arms may be blessed and made effectual for the re-establishment of law, order, and peace throughout the wide extent of our country; and that the inestimable

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boon of civil and religious liberty, earned under His guidance and blessing by the labors and sufferings of our fathers, may be restored in all its original excellence:

Therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do appoint the last Thursday in September next as a day of humiliation, *prayer*, and fasting for all the people of the nation. And I do earnestly recommend to all the people, and especially to all ministers and teachers of religion, of all denominations, and to all heads of families, to observe and keep that day, according to their several creeds and modes of worship, in all humility and with all religious solemnity, to the end that the *united prayer of the nation* may ascend to the Throne of Grace, and bring down plentiful blessings upon our country.<sup>64</sup>

April 10, 1862:

It is therefore recommended to the people of the United States that, at their next weekly assemblages in their accustomed places of public worship which shall occur after notice of this proclamation shall have been received, they especially acknowledge and render thanks to our Heavenly Father for these inestimable blessings; that they then and there implore spiritual consolation in behalf of all who have been brought into affliction by the casualties and calamities of sedition and civil war; and that they reverently

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*invoke the divine guidance* for our national counsels, to the end that they may speedily result in the restoration of peace, harmony, and unity throughout our borders, and hasten the establishment of fraternal relations among all the countries of earth.<sup>65</sup>

March 30, 1863:

It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, and confess our national sins, and to *pray* for clemency and forgiveness:

Now, therefore, in compliance with the request and fully concurring in the views of the Senate, I do by this my proclamation designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of national humiliation, fasting, and *prayer*. And I do hereby request all the people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite at their several places of public worship and their respective homes in keeping the day holy to the Lord, and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion. All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by divine teachings, that the *united cry of the nation* will be heard on high, and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins, and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace.<sup>66</sup>

July 15, 1863:

It is meet and right to recognize and confess the presence of the Almighty Father and the power of his hand equally in these triumphs and in these sorrows.

Now, therefore, be it known that I do set apart Thursday, the 6th day of August next, to be observed as a day of national thanksgiving, praise, and *prayer*, and I invite the people of the United States to assemble on that occasion in their customary places of worship, and, in the forms approved by their own consciences, render the homage due to the Divine Majesty for the wonderful things He has done in the nation's behalf, and *invoke* the influence of His Holy Spirit to subdue the anger which has produced and so long sustained a needless and cruel rebellion, to change the hearts of the insurgents, to guide the counsels of the government with wisdom adequate to so great a national emergency, and to visit with tender care and consolation throughout the length and breadth of our land all those who, through the vicissitudes of marches, voyages, battles, and sieges, have been brought to suffer in mind, body, or estate, and finally to lead the whole nation through the paths of repentance and submission to the Divine Will back to the perfect enjoyment of union and fraternal peace.<sup>67</sup>



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October 3, 1863:

I do, therefore, invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens. And I recommend to them that, while offering up the ascriptions justly due Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, *commend to His tender care* all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently *implore* the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation, and to restore it, as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity, and union.<sup>68</sup>

May 9, 1864:

Enough is known of army operations within the last five days to claim an especial gratitude to God, while what remains undone demands our most sincere *prayers* to, and reliance upon, Him without whom all human effort is vain. I recommend that all patriots, at their homes, in their places of public worship, and wherever they may



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be, unite in common thanksgiving and *prayer* to Almighty God.<sup>69</sup>

July 7, 1864:

I do hereby appoint the first Thursday of August next to be observed by the people of the United States as a day of national humiliation and *prayer*.

I do hereby further invite and request the heads of the executive departments of this government, together with all legislators, all judges and magistrates, and all other persons exercising authority in the land, whether civil, military, or naval, and all soldiers, seamen, and marines in the national service, and all the other loyal and law-abiding people of the United States, to assemble in their preferred places of public worship on that day, and there and then to render to the Almighty and merciful Ruler of the Universe such homages and such confessions, and to offer to Him such *supplications*, as the Congress of the United States have, in their aforesaid resolution, so solemnly, so earnestly, and so reverently recommended.<sup>70</sup>

September 3, 1864:

It is therefore requested that on next Sunday, in all places of worship in the United States, thanksgiving be offered to Him for His mercy in preserving our national existence against the insurgent rebels who have been waging a cruel war

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against the Government of the United States for its overthrow; and also that *prayer* be made for Divine protection to our soldiers and their leaders in the field, who have so often and so gallantly periled their lives in battling with the enemy; and for blessings and comforts from the Father of Mercies to the sick, wounded, and prisoners, and to the orphans and widows of those who have fallen in the service of their country, and that He will continue to uphold the Government of the United States against all the efforts of public enemies and secret foes.<sup>71</sup>

October 20, 1864:

And I do further recommend to my fellow-citizens aforesaid, that on that occasion they do reverently humble themselves in the dust, and from thence offer up penitent and *fervent prayers* and *supplications* to the great Disposer of events for a return of the inestimable blessings of peace, union, and harmony throughout the land which it has pleased Him to assign as a dwelling-place for ourselves and for our posterity throughout all generations.<sup>72</sup>

### *Another Proclamation*

Another proclamation was being prepared. Three days before he was shot, President Lincoln, in his last public speech, April

11, 1865, said: "He from whom all blessings flow must not be forgotten. A call for a national thanksgiving is being prepared and will be duly promulgated."<sup>73</sup>

### NEXT DOOR TO HEAVEN

Only a few months before Mr. Lincoln died he was waited upon at the White House by about two hundred members of the Christian Commission and officers of the army, who had been holding their annual meeting, to thank him for what he had done for the soldiers and sailors. Mr. George H. Stuart, of Philadelphia, chairman, made a short complimentary speech. Mr. Lincoln replied:

My friends, I owe no thanks for what you have done. You owe no thanks for what I have done. You have done your duty. I have done mine. Let us keep on doing our duty, and by the help of God we may yet save our country. I should be glad to take each of you by the hand.

He passed around shaking hands with all present.

Bishop Janes said, "Let us pray."

One who was present says: "We all fell on

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our knees, and such a prayer as followed seldom has been heard on earth. Mr. Lincoln responded heartily all the way through. It was next door to heaven in the White House that day.”<sup>74</sup>

### TAKES COUNSEL OF GOD

On another occasion, replying to certain ministers of the Christian Commission, Mr. Lincoln said:

If it were not for my firm belief in an overruling Providence, it would be difficult for me, in the midst of such complications of affairs, to keep my reason on its seat. But I am confident that the Almighty has his plans, and will work them out; and, whether we see it or not, they will be the best for us. I have always taken counsel of him, and referred to him my plans, and have never adopted a course of proceeding without being assured, as far as I could be, of his approbation. To be sure, he has not conformed to my desires, or else we should have been out of our trouble long ago. On the other hand, his will does not seem to agree with the wish of our enemy over there (pointing across the Potomac). He stands the Judge between us, and we ought to be willing to accept his decisions. We have reason to anticipate that it will be favorable to us, for our cause is right.<sup>75</sup>

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### IN ANSWER TO PRAYER

DOCTOR JOHN D. HILL, a well-known physician of Buffalo, New York, was a member of the Sanitary Commission. At a meeting of that organization in the White House one night he congratulated Mr. Lincoln on having originated such a gigantic plan for the care of the sick and wounded soldiers. Mr. Lincoln said:

You must carry your thanks to a Higher Being. One stormy night I tossed on my bed, unable to sleep as I thought of the terrible sufferings of our soldiers and sailors. I spent an hour in agonizing prayer to God for some method of relief, and he put the Sanitary Commission in my mind, with all its details, as distinctly as though the instructions had been written out by pen and handed to me. Hereafter, always thank your heavenly Father, and not me, for this organization, which has eased so much pain and saved so many lives.<sup>76</sup>

### REMEMBERED IN PRAYER

MR. NOAH BROOKS, an intimate friend, tells of a conversation with the President just after his second election. In reply to the remark that he might remember that in

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all these cares he was daily remembered by those who prayed, not to be heard of men, as no man ever before was remembered, he caught at the homely phrase and said:

Yes, I like that phrase, "not to be heard of men," and guess it is generally true, as you say. At least I have been told so, and I have been a good deal helped by just that thought.

Then he solemnly and slowly added:

I should be the most presumptuous blockhead upon this footstool if I had for one day thought I could discharge the duties which have come upon me since I came into this place without the aid and enlightenment of One who is stronger and wiser than all others.<sup>77</sup>

### OBEYING ORDERS

MR. L. E. CHITTENDEN, who was register of the treasury under President Lincoln, states that in an interview Mr. Lincoln said:

We have no right to criticize or complain. He [God] *is* on our side, and so is the Bible, and so are the churches and Christian societies and organizations—all of them, so far as I know, almost without an exception. It makes me stronger and more confident to know that all the Christians in the loyal States are praying for our success, and



that all their influences are working to the same end. Thousands of them are fighting for us, and no one will say that an officer or a private is less brave because he is a praying soldier. At first, when we had such long spells of bad luck, I used to lose heart sometimes. Now, I seem to know that Providence has protected and will protect us against any fatal defeat. All we have to do is to trust the Almighty, and keep on obeying his orders and executing his will.<sup>78</sup>

#### QUAKERESS PRAYING WITH HIM

MR. F. B. CARPENTER, the artist who painted the "Signing of the Proclamation," relates what was said by a gentleman at a dinner party of disloyalists in Washington during Mr. Lincoln's second administration, in part as follows: "I was up at the White House, having called to see the President on business. I was shown into the office of his private secretary, and told that Mr. Lincoln was busy just then, but would be disengaged in a short time. While waiting I heard a very earnest prayer, being uttered in a loud female voice in the adjoining room. I inquired what it meant, and was told that an old Quaker lady, a friend of the President,



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had called that afternoon, and taken tea with the President at the White House, and that she was then praying with Mr. Lincoln. After the lapse of a few minutes the prayer ceased, and the President, accompanied by a Quakeress not less than eighty years old, entered the room where I was sitting. I made up my mind then, gentlemen, that Mr. Lincoln was not a bad man, and I don't think it will be easy to efface the impression that the scene I witnessed and the voice I heard made on my mind.'"<sup>79</sup>

### HIS INNER LIFE

HONORABLE WILLIAM REID, who was well acquainted with the Lincoln family, wrote:

"Were I allowed to unfold to the public what is sacred, that which I know of Mr. Lincoln's inner life during the four years he was President, his memory would be revered by all Christians for his entire dependence during that eventful period upon God's guidance, and not on himself. Truly, no man thought less of himself and of his nothingness without God.""<sup>80</sup>

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### PRESIDENT AND CABINET IN PRAYER

"On the receipt of the news of the capitulation of Lee, as we learn from a friend intimate with the late President Lincoln, the Cabinet meeting was held an hour earlier than usual. Neither the President nor any member was able, for a time, to give utterance to his feelings. At the suggestion of Mr. Lincoln all dropped on their knees, and offered, in silence and in tears, their humble and heartfelt acknowledgments to the Almighty for the triumph he had granted to the national cause."<sup>81</sup>

### LAST INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Three days before Mr. Lincoln's death, a Quaker lady was visiting him. He asked her to pray with him, and she felt his hand tremble upon hers like a leaf. Afterward he said, "I feel helped and strengthened by your prayers."<sup>82</sup>

### IN GOD'S HANDS

Mr. Lincoln was frequently warned of the danger of assassination. From the day of

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his election he seems to have expected it. A little while before the end he said:

I do not consider that I have ever accomplished anything without God, and if it be his will that I must die by the hand of an assassin, I must be resigned. I must do my duty as I see it and leave the rest with God.

At another time he said, "I am in God's hands; let him do with me what seemeth good to him."<sup>83</sup>

### HIS LAST WORDS

Mr. Lincoln has been severely criticized for being in the theater the last night of his life. The reader may be surprised at what I am about to say. I ask you to withhold judgment until you have thought it through very carefully. To my mind, that last hour in the theater is one of the most beautiful and most precious in all of Lincoln's life. It is the finest gem with the rarest setting in all American history. Most people have little difficulty in thinking of religious things when at church or an occasion of that kind. To be *in* the world, but not *of* the world, is, according to the Bible, a true test of the Christian.

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As the apostle Paul says, "My citizenship is in heaven."

The REV. DOCTOR MINER says: "Mrs. Lincoln informed me that the last day he lived was the happiest of his life. The very last moments of his conscious life were spent in conversation with her about his future plans, and what he wanted to do when his term of office expired. He said he wanted to visit the Holy Land and see those places hallowed by the footprints of the Saviour. He was saying there was no city he so much desired to see as Jerusalem; and with the words half spoken on his tongue, the bullet of the assassin entered the brain, and the soul of the great and good President was carried by the angels to the New Jerusalem above."<sup>84</sup>

### A STRANGE COINCIDENCE

GENERAL LEE surrendered on Palm Sunday. Lincoln was shot on Good Friday, which at that time was not regarded as a sacred anniversary nearly as widely as it is now. Funeral services were held in all the churches of the land on Easter Sunday.

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### THE GLOW OF HIS SOUL

Many who knew Lincoln intimately have spoken of the indescribable radiance of his countenance at certain times. One of his private secretaries, William O. Stoddard, told the author that he had often seen it, which filled him with awe and wonder. He wrote: "I have seen him, more than once, with a great light on his face, a shining from within that awed and startled me. Right there is an unspeakable solemnity of thought and faith. I will transfer its consideration to those who are able to understand, from their own inner life, a spiritual lamp for that illumination."

CHARLES A. DANA said, "Nor have I ever seen another face which would light as Mr. Lincoln's when something touched his heart."

Some of the things written by other acquaintances are:

"He was, in fact, transfigured."

"An indescribable expression of serene joy."

"With that heavenly look in his face."

"The homely, sad face irradiated with the light of divine emotion."

"His face lit up with a divine look as he said these words."

"With a look full of benevolence and tenderness—such a look as rarely illuminates any face."

"His swarthy, rugged, homely face was glorified by the delight of his soul, which shone out of his features."

"His face aglow like the face of a prophet."

"Like one inspired, his face aglow, the personification of moral powers."

"As when the lights suddenly blaze behind a cathedral's window, flashing beauty where was but formless dullness, so the soul-light illumined those rugged features and poured from the wonderful eyes."

MR. HENRY B. RANKIN says: "There was to me an unapproachable grandeur in the man when he was in this mood of inner solitude. It isolated and—I always thought—exalted him above his ordinary life."

One who heard his last speech says: "When the President, with pale face and his



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soul flashing through his eyes, advanced to speak, he looked more like a demigod than a man crowned with the fleeting days of mortality."

One who looked upon his face a few hours after his death, says: "Notwithstanding the violence of the death of the President, there was something beautiful as well as grandly solemn in the expression of the placid face. There lurked the sweetness and gentleness of childhood, and the stately grandeur of god-like intellect."

MRS. MARY A. LIVERMORE wrote: "No painter has ever put into the sad face of the President any hint of the beauty that could radiate and completely metamorphose his homely features, when his great soul shone out through them. No sculptor has ever liberated from the imprisoning marble the face that shone like an angel's when the depths of his large heart were reached. 'No artist is successful,' said Healy, one of the most successful of painters of portraits, 'who does not bring out on the canvas, or in the marble, the best there is in his subject, the loftiest ideal of Nature when she designed



the man.' If this be true, then neither painter nor sculptor has ever been successful with Mr. Lincoln's face."

Holy living and fellowship with the Divine is the only explanation.

When Moses held communion with God on the mount, his face became radiant with divine glory, though "he wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him" (Exodus 34. 29).

As Jesus prayed in the mount, "The fashion of his countenance was altered" (Luke 9. 28).

The great apostle speaks of this transforming vision saying: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3. 18).



## SOURCE MATERIAL

Following is a list of books, sets of books, magazines, and papers from which quotations have been made. The first word is the one used in references under "Where Found," p. 103.

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David Homer Bates, 1907. The Century Company, publishers.

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## WHERE FOUND

The numbers correspond to the index numbers throughout the book.

The first word refers to "Source Material," p. 99.

- <sup>1</sup> Tarbell, p. 3.
- <sup>2</sup> Tarbell, p. 11.
- <sup>3</sup> Tarbell, p. 14.
- <sup>4</sup> Tarbell, p. 25.
- <sup>5</sup> Tarbell, p. 39.
- <sup>6</sup> Tarbell, p. 50.
- <sup>7</sup> Tarbell, p. 64.
- <sup>8</sup> Tarbell, p. 78.
- <sup>9</sup> Tarbell, p. 69.
- <sup>10</sup> Scrapbook, p. 54.
- <sup>11</sup> Holland, p. 436.
- <sup>12</sup> Johnstone, p. 192.
- <sup>13</sup> Minutes, p. 30. Fowler, p. 102.
- <sup>14</sup> White, pp. 11-16.
- <sup>15</sup> Chiniquy, pp. 657, 658, 662.
- <sup>16</sup> Bates, p. 45.
- <sup>17</sup> Holland, p. 237.
- <sup>18</sup> Whitney, p. 202.
- <sup>19</sup> Ketcham, p. 22. Herndon-Weik, Vol. I, p. 47.
- <sup>20</sup> Scrapbook, p. 51.
- <sup>21</sup> Register.

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- <sup>22</sup> Journal (1861).
- <sup>23</sup> Bates, p. 55.
- <sup>24</sup> Scrapbook, p. 52.
- <sup>25</sup> Scrapbook, p. 54.
- <sup>26</sup> Advocate.
- <sup>27</sup> Scrapbook, p. 52.
- <sup>28</sup> Works.
- <sup>29</sup> Scrapbook, p. 54.
- <sup>30</sup> Johnstone, p. 91.
- <sup>31</sup> Presbyterian.
- <sup>32</sup> Chapman, Vol. 2, p. 394.
- <sup>33</sup> Telegraph, p. 226.
- <sup>34</sup> Chapman, Vol. I, p. 226.
- <sup>35</sup> Works.
- <sup>36</sup> Maryland.
- <sup>37</sup> Scrapbook, p. 54.
- <sup>38</sup> Circuit, p. 595.
- <sup>39</sup> Carpenter, p. 89.
- <sup>40</sup> Works.
- <sup>41</sup> Youth.
- <sup>42</sup> Ward, pp. 47-49.
- <sup>43</sup> Blake.
- <sup>44</sup> Rusling, p. 15.
- <sup>45</sup> Rusling, p. 15.
- <sup>46</sup> Scrapbook, p. 54.
- <sup>47</sup> Holland, p. 435.
- <sup>48</sup> Whitney, p. 207.
- <sup>49</sup> Browne, Vol. 7, p. 378.

- <sup>50</sup> Curtis, p. 385.
- <sup>51</sup> Thayer, p. 353.
- <sup>52</sup> Raymond, p. 732.
- <sup>53</sup> Curtis, p. 383.
- <sup>54</sup> Review, p. 156.
- <sup>55</sup> Rusling, p. 417.
- <sup>56</sup> Chiniquy, p. 710.
- <sup>57</sup> Fowler.
- <sup>58</sup> Merwin, p. 26.
- <sup>59</sup> Notebook.
- <sup>60</sup> Tribune.
- <sup>61</sup> Scribner, p. 340.
- <sup>62</sup> Browne, Vol. II, p. 194.
- <sup>63</sup> Oldroyd, p. 254.
- <sup>64</sup> Works.
- <sup>65</sup> Works.
- <sup>66</sup> Works.
- <sup>67</sup> Works.
- <sup>68</sup> Works.
- <sup>69</sup> Works.
- <sup>70</sup> Works.
- <sup>71</sup> Works.
- <sup>72</sup> Works.
- <sup>73</sup> Works.
- <sup>74</sup> Holland, p. 439.
- <sup>75</sup> Holland, p. 440.
- <sup>76</sup> Globe.
- <sup>77</sup> Harper, p. 226.

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<sup>78</sup> Chittenden, p. 450.

<sup>79</sup> Carpenter, p. 191.

<sup>80</sup> Reid.

<sup>81</sup> Raymond, p. 735. This story was carried in all the leading papers at the time, and, as the Hon. Hugh McCulloch, who was Lincoln's Secretary of the Treasury, says, "They didn't try to refute it for twenty-five years" (1891).

<sup>82</sup> Binns, p. 321.

<sup>83</sup> Thayer, p. 352.

<sup>84</sup> Scrapbook, p. 52.

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